

ORIGINALS sent to FHWA

9/12/06

06-0054



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**
Douglas B. MacDonald
Secretary of Transportation

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September 11, 2006

Mr. Dan Mathis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
711 South Capitol Way, Suite 501
Olympia, WA 98501-1284

Attn: Don Petersen

**Subject: Statewide Blanket Proprietary Concrete Block Faced Structural Earth Walls
Proprietary Item Request**

Dear Mr. Mathis:

Attached is a statewide blanket approval request for the two pre-approved structural earth wall systems referenced in the Washington State Department of Transportation General Special Provisions used in contracts throughout the State.

As stated in the request these items are the only two concrete block faced structural earth wall systems that meet WSDOT pre-approval process at this time. The Bridge and Structures division continue to evaluate alternative concrete block faced structural earth wall systems.

It is possible that these items will be used on future New/Reconstruction projects, thus these requests are being forwarded to FHWA.

We concur with the request for proprietary item use through September 2008.

Sincerely,

Richard Albin
Assistant State Design Engineer

RA:sdl



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Memorandum

September 7, 2006

TO: H. Peterfeso/D. Albin
E&EP/Design - 47330

FROM: R. A. Lewis/M. H. Bauer *MB*
PHONE: 705-7396/705-7190

SUBJECT: Concrete Block Faced Structural Earth Wall
GSP13033.GB6

The Bridge and Structures Office requests blanket proprietary item approval for the two concrete block faced structural earth wall products, currently specified in GSP 13033.GB6, through September 2008.

As stewards for the public interest, the Bridge and Structures Office and Materials Laboratory Geotechnical Services Branch are responsible for overseeing the process for reviewing wall systems seeking WSDOT pre-approval as structural earth wall systems. This pre-approval process currently includes successful completion of a technical evaluation similar to that formerly performed by the Highway Innovative Technology Evaluation Center (HITEC) of Washington DC, as well as an internal WSDOT review of the wall system components and design calculations for representative walls.

Since the inception of the structural earth wall GSP in the early 1980's, Tensar's Mesa Wall and Keystone Retaining Wall System's KeySystem I wall are the only two concrete block faced structural earth wall systems to have successfully completed the WSDOT pre-approval process.

At this time, we know of no other concrete block faced structural earth wall systems either seeking pre-approval from WSDOT or with a strong enough performance record to merit successful completion of the WSDOT pre-approval process. For this reason, the Bridge and Structures Office deems the use of the two specified concrete block faced structural earth wall systems to be in the public's interest.

We will continue to evaluate alternative concrete block faced structural earth wall systems as they are submitted to this office and the Materials Laboratory Geotechnical Services Branch for consideration.

If you have questions concerning this request, please contact Mike Bauer at (360)-705-7190.

RAL:dm
MHB

cc: J. G. Cuthbertson, Materials Laboratory - 47365
M. Talukdar, Bridge and Structures- 47340